

Peer Coaching: Veteran High School Teachers Take the Lead on Learning

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A voluntary peer-coaching program is described along with the accompanying cultural change that occurred at a suburban high school. Veteran teachers participating in this research reported that peer coaching gave them meaningful feedback, motivation to direct their learning, increased levels of trust and morale among themselves, and justification to do more work. Findings suggest that teachers became more active in designing professional learning experiences when they expected such activities would positively affect student learning.

Peer coaching is a practice in which teachers work together through a process that includes preconferencing, observation, and postconferencing (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001). Showers (1985) indicated one of the purposes of peer coaching is “to build communities of teachers who continually engage in the study of their craft, an interactive, reciprocal relationship among professionals” (p. 4). Peer coaching as a differentiated form of instructional supervision supports adult learning and development (Zepeda, 2003). Central to facilitating adult learning are six principles advocated by Brookfield (1986):

- Voluntary participation
- Participant respect for each other
- Collaboration
- Atmosphere of critical reflection
- Facilitation of learning that promotes self-directed, proactive learning opportunities.

According to Glatthorn (1997), differentiated supervision is “an approach to supervision that provides teachers with options about the kinds of supervisory and evaluative services they receive” (p. 3). Meeting the needs of teachers with varying abilities requires supervisors to differentiate their supervision and to provide teachers with programs that help them to improve instruction. Supervision can be differentiated through a variety of ways including informal obser-

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vations of teachers by principals or through peer-mediated efforts such as peer coaching, mentoring, focused study groups, or any other activity that affords teachers the opportunity to tailor activities to meet their learning needs.

This case study details the work of a peer-coaching program at Shiloh High School, Snellville, GA, a school where teachers have become the owners and initiators of their own professional learning, and where conversations about teaching and learning have increased. The veteran teachers who chose to participate in the voluntary peer-coaching program at Shiloh had the opportunity to make numerous choices throughout the program. The ability of the leadership team to differentiate supervision to meet the learning needs of a group of veteran teachers who displayed a variety of instructional skills and developmental levels enhanced the value of the peer-coaching program. By engaging in individual conversations with each teacher, the leadership team ascertained the strategies needed for supporting teacher learning that supported student learning.

The goal at Shiloh was to increase conversations about teaching and learning and to develop teachers as self-directing initiators with regard to their own professional growth. Participation in this voluntary peer-coaching program has grown from 26 participants in the first year to 85 participants in the fifth year (2003–04). Through this program, Shiloh's goal has become a reality.

The Context of Shiloh High School

Shiloh High School is located in Gwinnett County, GA, 20 miles east of Atlanta. Gwinnett County Public Schools serve 130,000 students; it is the largest school system in Georgia. Shiloh—a comprehensive high school serving nearly 2,100 students in grades 9–12—has experienced a change in demographics over the past 5 years, moving from nearly 70% White students, 25% African American, and 5% from various other ethnic backgrounds, to its present ethnic representation that includes 59.4% White, 30.8% African American, 4.7% Hispanic, 3.4% Asian, with other groups completing the total school enrollment.

The faculty at Shiloh includes 135 teachers with 70% having either specialist or master's degrees and 5% with doctorates. In addition to the administrative team, the department chairs serve on the Shiloh Leadership Team, making joint decisions affecting both students and faculty members at Shiloh. The assistant principals have an instructional supervisory role in addition to their other responsibilities. One of the assistant principals oversees the academic departments and works in tandem with the department heads. The assistant principals are expected to attend departmental meetings, promoting communication as well as assisting the department chairs with needs and issues when necessary.

The Context for Change

During the 1996–97 school year, a concentrated focus on improving instruction was initiated by examining what best practices look like for both students and teachers. Teachers were encouraged to serve on system committees that were reviewing the curriculum and developing countywide assessments. Over the next 2 years, the principal led faculty and staff members, students, and the community in their first in-depth professional study to determine whether the school wanted to move to a block schedule format. The majority of the faculty and staff members as well as several students and community members attended workshops and conferences on alternative scheduling, visited schools where alternative scheduling was already in place, and listened to subject-area specific speakers discuss scheduling and alternative uses of time.

After 2 years of study, discussion, and review, Shiloh's faculty members voted to move to a 4 × 4 block schedule with a 97% approval vote. Before the vote, however, faculty members were challenged by the principal to vote against the alternative schedule if they were not willing to change the ways they taught. This challenge helped to set the bar for teaching, learning, and for different types of support—teachers helping teachers improve their own instructional practices in addition to the work that assistant principals and department chairs provided through classroom observations and individual goal-setting conferences.

Change Starts at the Top

In 1999, the year Shiloh moved to a block schedule, it was determined that the instructional supervision by school leaders was less than effective. Classroom observations and conferencing were often at the end of the list, instead of being the first priorities of the day for the leadership team. The principal invited a university researcher to lead the administrative team in reevaluating the professional learning within the school as well as the instructional leadership of the team. The self-study revealed that staff development opportunities did not consistently encourage collegiality or apply to the day-to-day needs of teachers. Although there were numerous staff development opportunities, they were not always data driven or aligned with school and system goals toward increasing student learning. To reinvent their professional learning program, the administrative team worked to develop a program that would engage teachers in meaningful learning opportunities.

Although Shiloh was satisfying requirements with regard to evaluation, administrators were not supervising teachers with the purpose of supporting learning—for students or teachers. The first goal of the self-study was to improve opportunities for teachers to learn from one another. One approach for achieving this goal was to increase the conversation about teaching and learning that was occurring in the school.

Gwinnett County schools, at that same time, were moving toward a results-based evaluation system (RBES) for teachers and schools. At all Gwinnett County schools, teachers past their third year are evaluated using the RBES, whereas teachers in their first 3 years participate in a more traditional teacher evaluation program with administrators conducting three formal classroom observations per year. The RBES system includes goal-setting conferences between the teacher and an administrator. Each teacher works with an administrator in the spring and fall to set and to review two or three academic and professional learning goals for the year.

It was an expectation that Shiloh teachers would set goals for student achievement and for their own professional learning. These goals were to be aligned with local school plans for improvement and systemwide goals. Moreover, goals were to be measurable and determined on baseline data. Plans for implementing and assessing goal attainment were to be discussed. These administrator-teacher conversations about teaching and learning served as models for the teacher-to-teacher conversations that evolved through the implementation of the peer-coaching model.

According to Zepeda (1999), principals can encourage learning communities by supporting talk among peers along with increased self-reflection and analysis on the part of individual teachers. Teachers working in isolation do not have many opportunities to talk about what occurs in their classrooms and why. Through the peer-coaching program, this talk moved from goal-setting conversations with the administrator to teachers talking about what they wanted to learn to become more effective in the classroom. This is how and why peer coaching evolved at Shiloh High School. Peer coaching, as a job-embedded learning opportunity, encourages teachers to examine and change practice, and Sparks and Hirsh (1997) reported, "the most powerful learning is that which occurs in response to challenges currently being faced by the learner and that allows for immediate application, experimentation, and adaptation on the job" (p. 52).

If effective schools require informed teachers discussing teaching and learning, then administrators must strive to provide teachers the opportunity for collegial, professional discussion (Brundage, 1996; Eaker, DuFour, & Burnette, 2002). As a leadership team, Shiloh's administrators were determined to create opportunities for more teacher talk by implementing a differentiated supervisory effort in which teachers would be given the opportunity to observe each other teach and engage in extended discussions during pre- and postconferences.

To provide the type of atmosphere that teachers need for continued renewal and growth, staff development and supervision must include opportunities for these teachers to work together, to learn and grow together, and to share their expertise with each other (Burke, 2000). The peer-coaching

program at Shiloh offered teachers these opportunities. Veteran teachers, in particular, benefit from differentiated supervisory activities, generally needing less direct guidance in their professional learning than their less experienced peers do (Glickman et al., 2001). Moving from isolationism toward becoming a professional learning community, some teachers at Shiloh began to trust each other enough to participate in a voluntary peer-coaching program.

Study

Because Shiloh's goal was to increase conversations about teaching and learning, the study examined the perspectives of 14 veteran teachers who were participating in the voluntary peer-coaching program. The researchers sought to discover more specifically why veteran teachers participated in a voluntary peer-coaching program and what meanings peer coaching had for these teachers. Two guiding questions led this investigation:

1. What motivated you to participate in peer coaching?
2. What meanings does peer coaching have for you?

The participants of this study included 14 teachers with 20 or more years of experience: 3 men and 11 women. The teachers' years of experience ranged from 21 to 37. Four teachers were serving as department chairs, and 2 teachers were former department chairs. One participant was a former administrator. Seven of the 14 participants were in their first year of peer coaching and 7 were in their second year.

To ensure stable data, interviews were audio recorded and field notes were kept. The interviews with each participant lasted from 20 minutes to 1 hour. The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used, woven throughout the tasks of collecting, coding, and analyzing the data. The data were constantly compared, reviewed, and analyzed throughout and after the collection process. All first-round interviews were structured in the same format, noting codes and allowing categories to emerge only after numerous participants were interviewed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Using this format, questions that were more specific were formulated for use in later interviews and in follow-up interviews, constantly comparing and analyzing data. As categories emerged, participants were asked to validate the findings to minimize distortions (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

Although it is unwise to overgeneralize from the findings of a single case study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982), the perspectives of the participants can lead to some generalizable concepts about learning and the value of peer coaching as a supervisory model for veteran teachers. The reader is reminded to consider the context of Shiloh. The school had undergone a change by implementing a block schedule, and the principal had set the expectation for changes in instructional practices. Perhaps these variables and others influenced the outcomes of this study.

Findings

Throughout the interviews, 10 themes emerged with 5 themes addressing motivation and 5 addressing the meanings that the participants held for peer coaching. Figure 1 provides the reader with an overview of the categories of motivation and the meaning gained from participating in peer coaching. Figure 1 also identifies the themes that emerged within these two categories.

Motivation to Participate in Peer Coaching

Desire to learn. Of the 14 participants, 11 mentioned the importance of peer coaching to their own learning. They identified an area they wanted to work on and worked with a fellow teacher to improve in that area. Although not every teacher approached their coaching in this way, teachers who had specific areas in which they wanted to learn or improve often chose a partner who was known to possess those skills. One participant noted:

I'd like somebody in my field to come watch and see if they see anything, or maybe if I have a particular concern, I want them, as another band director or another music educator, to come in and comment. This past year I did it [peer coaching] with the Berkeley band director. I went over one day and made comments, and then he came over here. He wanted me to offer him helpful, general band comments. I had some very specific things I wanted him to observe. I'm instructing well, but I'm not happy with my presentation. I'm not happy with how I evaluate them [students]. So I think it's all about, just like when you're cold and hungry, your priority is food and shelter, and when that's done, you move on to other priorities, so I think it's the same thing.

Another participant, a veteran teacher with 37 years of experience, wanted to work with someone with "fresh ideas" to avoid "stagnation."

We were both teaching the same subject area. Kendra was new to Shiloh and I thought it would be a good idea to get someone who was coming from another school, another science department, where perhaps they do things a bit differently than we do here. Even the methods that we were doing in a particular content, one teacher may do it differently than another, and then after talking, I would go back and change something in my methods.

As these participants demonstrated, they were motivated to participate because they wanted to learn. Teachers who participated in peer coaching often had a specific area in mind in which they wanted to gain skills. They were able to determine their needs and to seek the learning they needed to grow in

Figure 1. Common Themes

Motivation to Participate in Peer Coaching				
Motivated because they wanted to learn	Motivated because of experiences with informal peer coaching	Motivated because they wanted meaningful feedback	Motivated because they found the choices attractive	Motivated because they were not satisfied by the traditional observation
Meanings Gained from Participating in Peer Coaching				
Meaningful feedback	Self-directed learning	Trust among peer coaches	Increased morale among peer coaches	Worth from extra work

a predetermined area. Teachers talked with their peers about their practices, working collaboratively toward improving their teaching and learning.

Informal peer coaching experience. The routine of working with their colleagues provided the initial comfort needed to promote participation in the coaching. In addition, they moved toward the voluntary program because it provided a sanctioned opportunity for them to do what they had been doing on their own all along. More than half of the participants mentioned their experiences with informal peer coaching. One participant elaborated:

Informally, we do it [peer coaching] all the time. We really couldn't survive without it because on block, when somebody has mastered a prep, you have to see what they've done, how they get through it, and what's easiest and hardest, so we talk a lot. We talk shop a lot, probably more than we need to. It's a good sounding board because at least people understand where you're coming from.

Nine of the 14 teachers specifically mentioned their experiences with informal peer coaching. Because of these experiences, they were motivated to participate. They had worked with other teachers, primarily those within their subject areas, for years, regarding curriculum and management issues.

Need for meaningful feedback. More than half of the teachers reported being motivated by meaningful feedback. A participant, who reported that peer coaching provided opportunities for "professionally useful camaraderie," noted her attraction to idea sharing:

It helps me to feel like there are so many people that I can ask questions to that will give me helpful information, not just pats on the back. Those are necessary, too, but [I like] actually helpful feedback.

Another participant explained:

I think the thing that's most helpful to me is just being able to get together with other teachers and sharing new ideas. Of course, I keep taking classes, and you know, staff development, and they show you new ways. But it's just really nice to get together with new people. I would like to have times to be able to go observe other teachers, especially English teachers, and see how they're teaching certain things, especially things I'm teaching. And sometimes, I'll get new ideas, and I'll think, 'Oh, that was a great idea! Why didn't I think of that?' I like sharing sessions a lot. I like learning things with what I have. I like learning, sharing my ideas, and having [talks with] people that have knowledge.

Not only were peer coaches motivated because they wanted to share ideas, a component of meaningful feedback, but they were also motivated because they received affirmation for the work being accomplished in their classrooms:

Last year, her feedback was that she thought everything was great. But I told her, this year, I didn't want her to say that to me. I wanted her to find something that she thought I did really well and to talk to me about that, to tell me something that she noticed that I could work on because, to me, that was the purpose of this, giving you really specific feedback.

Attraction to choices. Twelve out of the 14 teachers mentioned that they were motivated to participate in the voluntary peer-coaching program because they liked the choices offered throughout the program. The choice to participate was just one of many choices the participants were empowered to make as they worked through the program. Choices included, for example, with whom to partner, what to tackle through coaching, and when and how often to meet. A participant explained:

Choice is important, I think. I don't think it [partner choice] should be mandated. Sometimes you get with someone and you discover that it just doesn't work. I mean, you may think that they don't have anything to offer, or your personalities clash, or they don't ever have time for you, or you find that you're uncomfortable with them or whatever. So you need to have the option to choose someone else the next year if you feel that way.

Another participant stated:

We decided to do question and answer techniques. We decided that was a good thing to observe. We decided to figure out, to be

tallying, how many times we called on each student. I chose her because she approached me with it. I'd like to stay in my department, but after a while, I might like to go to somebody in another department and see how they do things. So I like the fact that you can choose anybody you want.

Teachers found the choices offered throughout the program empowering. They liked the choice to participate or not participate, and the choices offered with regard to their partner and the structure of the program.

Dissatisfaction with traditional observations. Every teacher interviewed contrasted the observation and feedback received via peer coaching with the traditional observation and feedback from a department chair or administrator. Teachers craved feedback and did not feel it was present, to their satisfaction, after traditional observations. A participant shared:

Anytime you have a checklist, you're always limited to those answers, and there's not any give and take. It's not measuring things that maybe the teacher needs or wants for their improvement. It's basically a formatted situation. You are either satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or needs improvement, or whatever, and you get a little bit of dialogue at the bottom. I realize there's a need for that, but for anybody who wants to try and improve their teaching, that would not suffice. It's not interactive. It's someone observing and then telling me what they see I need to do rather than going and observing me and saying, "Okay, so what was the point of your lesson today?"

A participant expressed her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation:

I think the person comes in to do the observation with all the best intentions, spends their 20 or 30 minutes in there, and yes, I'm teaching and doing my routine. What I get back doesn't necessarily motivate me to do anything different or doesn't jog me to go, "Ooo, why don't I do that?" It doesn't do anything for me professionally.

Meanings Gained From Participating in Peer Coaching

What meanings did these teachers hold for peer coaching? The meanings that the participants held for peer coaching were powerful indicators for the peer-coaching program.

Meaningful feedback. All 14 teachers mentioned the meaningful feedback they received through participation in the voluntary peer-coaching program. This meaningful feedback included the sharing of ideas as well as the

affirmation of skills they received. The anticipation of this feedback was also one of the primary reasons for choosing to participate in the program. Relative to the affirmation received from her partner, which she referred to as "confirmation," a participant revealed:

I focused on some classroom management when she came to visit me. I knew that, since she had larger classes, management had to be something under her belt. I was looking for ideas as to management with a particularly rowdy group of kids. What I had done, that she saw evidence of, was right on track! She confirmed that what I was basically doing was what she would have done, and that there were personalities involved in the problem, and that, in her opinion, I was doing the best that could be done in that particular situation.

A 23-year veteran teacher shared:

We get asked to do a lot of things, you know. We do questionnaires and we do surveys, and we have discussions at department meetings and all of that, I know, is what people really do want from me. But to talk to a person who's asking me for help makes me feel like my 23 years [as a teacher] have been worth something. I feel valued, and sometimes we don't feel very valued.

Findings show that the teachers wanted to direct their learning, and the peer-coaching program provided the structure to do so.

Self-directed learning. Twelve of the 14 teachers wanted to direct their learning. For example, teachers asked whether the observation focus could be open ended, as opposed to the observer only watching and commenting on one component of the teaching and learning viewed during the classroom observation. A teacher asked to coach with someone outside of Shiloh and outside of his curriculum area. This teacher reported:

Sometimes it's even interesting to do it [peer coaching] from chorus to band or orchestra to band so that you're really out of the box. I personally would like to see it be not limited to people within your school. I would love it if it could be where, if I particularly respect a band director within the county, but not at Shiloh, that we could work it out where I could go there and do that. I would also like it to be more periodic. I like it maybe once a month or once every 9 weeks. I'm sure that I will run into a problem that I will want to work through every 9 weeks, and it could be a pedagogical problem, it could be a classroom management process, it could be just about anything.

Another teacher expressed her desire to change partners from year to year. She also noted her desire to visit teachers other than her chosen coaching partner, and said:

I think it would be neat if, besides the person that you're observing and is observing you, if, as a part of it, you could actually go into other teachers' classrooms and watch them teach. Maybe you could go to three or four others, maybe teachers of your choice that you've heard about. There are teachers at this school that I would love to see. That's one of the things I've always wished we could do more.

Trust among peer coaches. About half of the teachers noted greater trust among peer coaches. Teachers who worked together experienced increased trust, particularly since learning situations involved choice on their part. The open, caring opportunity that teachers needed to work together toward continued growth and renewal was provided, in the teachers' opinions, through the peer-coaching program. A special education teacher, who worked with the same business teacher 2 years in a row, found that the trust between her and her coaching partner established in the first year carried them through a more difficult second year. The difficulties were personal in nature, relating to health issues, but affected this teacher's time, in particular. She explained:

Since we had the foundation of the first year, we could play it easier, you know. We established trust that first night. By sharing so many things you're having problems with, you have to trust the other person. You have to do that to open yourself up and share your weaknesses and your faults. You have to trust the other person. We already knew each other well enough because of what we did the first year. The second year we could sort of bounce it off and sit down and accomplish a whole lot more in a less amount of time.

Another teacher believed trust originated with the administration's trust in teachers. He continued:

It's interactive, an interactive process with people with credibility...toward a mutually beneficial goal. I can interact with somebody that I think a lot of and I can get some ideas that are going to keep me fresh and help my students and help me. And, I can do that in turn for them. That's got to be the best situation.

The sense of trust among teachers in the program was enhanced by the relationships built through participation in coaching activities, namely observing each other's classrooms, but also the participants believed that the

structure of the program “built” trust. The overall increase in trust led teachers to note a greater morale among peer coaches.

Increased morale among peer coaches. About half of the participants noted greater morale among peer coaches. Their enthusiasm, confidence, and courage were enhanced as they participated in the peer-coaching program. A teacher shared:

For some reason, we're not thought of as professionals by a certain sector of the public. And so it [peer coaching] makes you feel like we have credibility with the administration who is willing to do that. I would think that an administration or a school system that would not allow peer coaching is assuming that the people they've hired are not competent enough to know what's best for them, and that they need this real structured process. And you know, to be honest, it's always easier to default to a pre-organized plan than it is to think through something that's out of the paradigm. All of a sudden now, I'm having to think about what I want out of it.

Worth from extra work. Eleven of the 14 teachers said they were motivated to participate in the program even though it involved “more work” for them. This motivation was due to the gains teachers anticipated. To this point, a teacher said:

My concern at the beginning was, “Was it more work?” and everybody said, “Yeah, it is,” and I thought, “How much more?” There are some people who would never try it just because it's more work, but it really ends up not work. It just ends up being something that you're glad you did, so it doesn't seem like work.

Another teacher, when asked why she and other teachers would participate in something that involved more work, responded, “For selfish reasons, for my own personal and professional reasons. I gain something out of it, so why not go to the trouble?” Another teacher, when asked why she would choose to do more work, responded:

I think personally, and this holds true for most human beings, that given the chance, we'd rather do something meaningful even though it might be harder, than to do something that is just another piece of paper, just another talk. Some of the things my partner said to me were things that needed to be improved which I was aware of. And her saying those things to me, it wasn't just her sitting there patting me on the back saying, “You were great,” but it was more meaningful.

Discussion

The perspectives teachers reported are only a part of the cultural change that occurred at Shiloh. Borrowing from the field of mentoring, Zepeda, Wood, and O'Hair (1996) and Blase and Blase (1998) called for a form of autosupervision. Zepeda et al. (1996) defined autosupervision as the ability of teachers to supervise themselves, analyzing their goals and progress through reflection and inquiry. Principals who provide teachers with peer-coaching opportunities will find themselves facilitating supervision more, but directing that supervision less. The adults involved in such programs will establish a culture of "asking for" instead of "being done to" with regard to their own professional growth and development. Ironically, for teachers to become empowered auto-supervisors, principals must be willing to do less of the traditional supervision they might have practiced for years. This move toward creating autosupervisors must be learned by supervisors (Arnau, 2001).

Teachers at Shiloh began to realize that the leadership team wanted them to own their professional learning. One teacher reported that she respected administrators who attempted to help her with her instruction, but that she needed someone in her subject area of AP calculus to help her determine how she could better teach her students a particular mathematical concept.

Teachers who chose to voluntarily peer coach displayed the characteristics of veteran teachers who crave differentiated adult learning opportunities. They were willing to do extra work because they anticipated gains from meaningful feedback. The participants benefited by receiving additional insight into their teaching, and they felt comfortable having a peer of their choice observe them. They received suggestions from their peers willingly, and often encouraged their peers to find an area for growth in which they could improve, even if they were master teachers. The teachers indicated that peer choice was a major incentive for them and appreciated hearing from a colleague in a teaching situation similar to their own. The nonthreatening environment encouraged teachers to complete the extra work because they believed they would learn something meaningful about their teaching.

Teachers' choices throughout the program were based on the amount of risk they were willing to take. They wanted choice about their partner and about the target growth area their partner would be invited to comment on in the postobservation conference. Teachers who were high-risk takers wanted to shape the program, making it their own. For example, instead of having a target growth area, some of these high-risk takers asked to have open-ended observations with their peers, and welcomed any comments or feedback their partner provided (Arnau, 2001). Firestone and Pennell (1993) stated that "feedback is central to maintaining high motivation and commitment to both organization and activity" (p. 503). Teachers wanted to

receive this feedback from someone they trusted, someone they considered expert, and someone that they felt would be honest with them.

For the participants in this voluntary peer-coaching program, they were willing to do extra work to gain this meaningful feedback. Darling-Hammond (1998) supported the notion that teachers need to reflect on their practice and that of others. These teachers wanted to reflect. They wanted feedback that was meaningful and specific to their strengths and weaknesses.

Teachers reported that they received meaningful feedback, affirmation of their skills, and as a result, they were motivated internally and externally from the trust of the administration for teachers to take control of their own learning. For these teachers, morale soared because of receiving new ideas, observing respected peers teaching classes, and talking with teachers in similar situations. Implementing the peer-coaching program assisted in the move toward an improved professional community by reducing teacher isolation and by encouraging teachers to plan and work together while talking about what they were doing (Lieberman, 1995).

Implications and Suggestions

Although many districts guide their supervision, evaluation, and staff development by mandates from their system-level personnel, the perspectives of the veteran teachers in this study imply that opportunities to discuss teaching—formally or informally—are valued by educators, an idea that might be applied in local schools. With regard to the teachers for whom principals are responsible, implications are drawn across several areas. Implications and suggestions are offered about veteran teachers and adult learners, motivation, risk taking, trust, and empowerment.

Those who direct professional growth opportunities need to be aware of the characteristics of veteran teachers and adult learning. The peer-coaching program at Shiloh has illustrated this with its willingness to give adult learners the responsibility for their learning and their actions. Principals are encouraged to provide opportunities for discussion among the adult learners in their schools. Adults need the opportunity to suggest what it is they want to learn, as well as how they plan to go about gaining that knowledge (Knowles, 1980).

Furthermore, veteran teachers involved in the peer-coaching program had the opportunity to shape the program based on their needs, and they were motivated to work for gains they determined to be meaningful. It would serve principals well to examine the motivations teachers have for participating in programs and to offer teachers differentiated learning opportunities based on these motivations.

Principals have the opportunity to enhance efficacy by providing an opportunity for teachers to choose to participate in a trusting, caring, and

open exchange with a chosen and respected fellow teacher. When teachers direct their growth from participating in voluntary peer-coaching programs, they develop a sense of ownership in the program. They find in themselves the power to produce the effects they desire. As teachers experience affirmation because of the choices they make, their sense of efficacy is enhanced. This has far-reaching implications for principals and others working toward improved teaching and learning.

Principals can promote trust among participants by consciously working to serve teachers as facilitators of a program as opposed to serving as directors of a program. Teachers who have choice will move through such programs and learning opportunities with a heightened sense of trust toward the program, the participants, and the administrators from whom they are receiving this trust. Principals who are willing to direct less and facilitate more will be able to maintain the trust they establish by offering differentiated learning opportunities to their teachers. Accompanying this heightened trust is an equally heightened sense of empowerment on the part of the teacher. Future areas for study might include the effect of peer coaching on student achievement.

In summary, voluntary peer coaching, as a form of supervision, motivates veteran teachers as adult learners to achieve higher levels of trust, empowerment, and efficacy, resulting in greater risk-taking and a movement toward self-supervision. For principals, peer coaching—presented as a voluntary, professional growth program, and guided by adult learning principles—will serve to increase not only teachers' perceptions of their own professional skills but also respect and morale among teachers as well (Arnau, 2001). Shiloh continues to support its goal of increasing conversations about teaching and learning through its peer-coaching program. 🐼

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